

## KINGSTON BUSINESS SCHOOL'S BRIGHT IDEAS PROGRAMME

Bright Ideas is the umbrella name for Kingston Business School's entrepreneurship development programme. At its heart is an ideas competition which is open to all students across the University. Preparation for entry includes workshops (both in-class and co-curricular), online resources, an online entry form, and a weekend bootcamp called Sprint.

A final pitching event judged by Alumni and other external supporters finds the competition winners. They are then invited to join a pre-accelerator programme over the summer months, which culminates in a pitch for investment and other support. This event launches the next year's programme.

The programme is in its 15th year, with continuously increasing participation numbers, reach across faculties, and impact.

Bright Ideas Stages:	Key activities
Entries (Sept – Dec)	Any KU student can enter. It is embedded into curriculum in several courses, where it is supported by workshops. In addition, open workshops are run weekly to help students articulate their ideas.
Evaluation and Development Process	Online Judging – entries are submitted online, and subject to 2 reviews each by a panel of 85 judges including KU staff, Alumni, and friendly entrepreneurs.
	Sprint Weekend - all entrants were invited to a start-up weekend designed for intensive input to idea development, confidence building for pitching, and team development. 100 students attended this year. The two days featured one to one and group mentoring of entrants, keynote talks and workshops. Mentors were drawn from Alumni, incubators, and SME support organisations.
	<p>Grand Final (6 February 2019) had 55 teams pitching their ideas to 8 panels of judges. A total of 48 judges participated – these were Alumni, academics, staff and friends of the University. One panel of distinguished alumni joined by video-conference link from Silicon Valley.</p> <p>Winners and runners-up from each panel were announced at an upbeat ceremony. Winners pitched their ideas, and a vote using Klickers provided a People's Choice award. A reception afterwards provided opportunity for students to get feedback, talk to judges and guests.</p>

#### Key participation statistics for Bright Ideas

Stage	2017/18	2018/19
Entries started	365	541
Entries submitted	240	355
Total students entered (many entered in teams)	580	628
Sprint weekend attendances	80	100
Teams pitching at final	54	54

**Why do we do it?** The central idea is to encourage students to consider themselves as innovators and problem solvers, providing them with a template for developing and evaluating innovations. Innovations may be products and services, commercial or social enterprises or campaigns.

Bright Ideas provides an opportunity for students to develop their skills as problem solvers within their courses or outside of it. The programme is embedded in numerous courses across the University. In 2018/19, the following courses had Bright Ideas embedded:

- MBA
- MSc Engineering
- MEng / BSc Engineering
- MSc International Business Management
- BSc International Business Management
- BSc Business Management
- MSc Managing Creative Economy
- MSc Innovation, Management, and Entrepreneurship
- BSc BioScience

**Connection with enterprises:** Approximately 100 external supporters are engaged through the process as judges, evaluators, coaches and mentors) providing students with advice, sounding boards, mentorship, and in some cases investment. They provide students with access to the needs of business: 12 mentors at Sprint weekend; 85 online judges (including staff, Alumni, local businesses); 45 judges at the final event (Alumni, staff).

**Impact:** “Being part of the bright ideas has made me grow in confidence as an individual and made me realise the potential of my idea as it moves out of university. Being part of the event has pushed me to present and talk in front of a variety of disciplines and people to explain my idea as clearly and enthusiastically as I could.” L6 Graphic Design student

A further impact is that the Business School is able to attract philanthropic funding for enterprise. Alumni are especially impressed with the range and depth of ideas that they hear in the course of



the competition. Staff, Alumni and Students all believe the mission of Bright Ideas – to increase innovation and contribute to an enterprising mindset – is essential.

Kingston's recognition that competition is a valuable way to enhance the curriculum has been an essential ingredient in the competition's success. The competition has encouraged colleagues to develop their curriculum, to integrate innovation and creative problem solving in support of students and the wider economy.